

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----071003 171552Z /40

O 171130Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6702
INFO USUN IMMEDIATE 896
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CAPETOWN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MAPUTO 0198

EXDIS

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, RH, US, MZ
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: MACHEL'S DESIRE FOR CONTACT WITH MUZOREWA
AND SITHOLE

REF: (A) STATE 039527, (B) MAPUTO 0192, (C) MAPUTO 0171

1. UK AMBASSADOR LEWEN AND I MET LAST NIGHT WITH SERGIO VIEIRA.
VIEIRA SEEMED TO BE FULLY BRIEFED ON THE MEETING LEWEN AND I
HAD WITH MACHEL ON FEBRUARY 11.

2. LEWEN AND I ASKED VIEIRA IF ANNOUNCEMENTS COMING OUT OF
SALISBURY ABOUT AGREEMENT BEING REACHED BETWEEN SMITH AND MUZOREWA
AND SITHOLE HAD CHANGED MACHEL'
ATTITUDES TOWARDS MUZOREWA OR SITHOLE OR HIS INTEREST IN CONTACTING
THEM. WE SAID THAT OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS WERE TRYING TO FIND OUT
EXACTLY WHAT HAD BEEN AGREED UPON IN ORDER TO DECIDE HOW
BEST TO PROCEED. WE SAID THAT AS FAR AS WE KNOW
OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS WERE STILL INTERESTED IN MEETING WITH
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MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE, BUT NOTED THAT OUR MEETINGS WITH
MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE WERE QUITE SEPARATE FROM INITIATIVE
ON WHICH MACHEL HAD ASKED FOR OUR HELP.

3. VIEIRA HESITATED TO SPEAK FOR MACHEL. HE SAID HE WOULD BE
SEEING THE PRESIDENT IN THE MORNING AND HE WOULD LET US KNOW
WHETHER THE PRESIDENT STILL WANTED TO CONTACT MUZOREWA AND

SITHOLE. VIEIRA TELEPHONE A SHORT WHILE AGO
TO SAY THAT INDEED THE PRESIDENT IS STILL VERY MUCH INTERESTED
IN GEETING IN TOUCH
WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE AND HOPED WE WOULD ASSIST HIM IN THIS
EFFORT. VIEIRA STRESSED THAT IT IMPORTANT THAT CONTACT BE ESTABLISHED
QUICKLY AND HE URGED US TO SEND AN INTERMEDIARY TO MAPUTO SOONEST
I PROMISED TO REPORT MACHELS
WISHES IMMEDIATELY TO WASHINGTON, BUT REMINDED HIM THAT WHILE
US WOULD LIKE TO BE
RESPONSIVE TO MACHEL'S REQUEST, NO DECISION HAD AS YET BEEN
REACHED ON WHETHER WE WOULD BE ABLE TO DO SO.

4. BASED ON WHAT MACHEL TOLD US ON SATURDAY (REFTEL C) AND FROM
VIEIRA'S COMMENTS LAST NIGHT, LWEEN AND I THINK MACHEL WANTS
TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE TO MAKE THE
FOLLOWING POINTS.

THAT ANY INTERNAL AGREEMENT SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA MAKE WITH
SMITH IS NOT GOING TO END THE FIGHTING ON CONTRARY IT WILL ONLY
PROLONG THE FIGHTING

-THAT IN FACT THE FIGHTING IS LIKELY TO BECOME NASTIER AND LEAD
TO TRIBAL AND RACIAL WAR:

-THAT IF MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE MAKE A DEAL WITH SMITH THE
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ABOVE CONSEQUENCES WILL REST CLEARLY
ON THEIR SHOULDERS:

-THAT MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THE ZIMBABWEAN
PEOPLE WILL REPUDIATE THEM AND THAT THEY WILL BE
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VIEWED AS TRAITORS BY OTHER AFRICANS AND
THE WORLD.

-THAT IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO TURN BACK FROM THIS DISASTER COURSE
THAT IF THEY WITHDRAW FROM TALKS WITH SMITH THEY WOULD BE WELCOME
TO RETURN TO PARTICIPATE IN ONGOING DISCUSSION TO FIND AN INTERNATIO-
ALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION AND END TO FIGHTING.

-THAT MACHEL (AND PERHAPS OTHER FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS) WILL ENSOURE
THEM A ROLE IN A TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT, AND THAT THERE WILL
BE A OPPORUTNITY FOR THEM TO CONTEST IN FREE AND IMPARTIAL ELECTIONS
THE RESULT OF WHICH WILL BE ACCEPTED BY MACHEL.

5. OBVIOUSLY, MACHEL'S SUGGESTION THAT THE UK/US CONSIDER

ODIFICATION OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE TRANSITION GOVERNING COUNCIL
TO GIVE MORE WEIGHT TO THE PATRIOTIC
FRONT, IF IT BECOMES KNOWN TO MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE, WILL NOT MAKE
THEM RECEPTIVE TO OUERTURES TO RETURN TO THE AAP TALKS.
MACHEL IS AWARE OF THIS TOO. BOTH LEWEN AND I THINK THAT MACHEL
WILL BACK OFF FROM PRESSING FOR MODIFICATION AND AGREE TO THE UK/US
PROPOSAL ON MEMBERSHIP IF MUZOREWA AND OR SITHOLE GIVE ANY
INDICATION THAT THEY WOULD WITHDRAW FROM THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT
TALKS. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE DO NOT

AGREE TO RETURN TO THE FOLD, THEN WE CAN BE ALMOST CERTAIN THAT
MACHEL WILL ARGUE THAT THEY NO LONGER DESERVE EQUAL REPRESENTATION
WITH ZAPU AND ZANU IN THE
GOVERNING COUNCIL, AND WE MAY ANTICIPATE PROBLEMS IN GAINING
MACHEL'S AND PF'S
ACCEPTANCE OF OUR PROPOSAL ON MEMBERSHIP.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----071045 171552Z /41

O 171130Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6703
INFO USUN IMMEDIATE 897
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CAPETOWN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MAPUTO 0198

EXDIS

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

6 MACHEL'S PURPOSE IN APPROACHING THE UK AND US FOR AN INTERMEDIARY
MAY BE MIXED. CERTAINLY MACHEL WOULD LIKE TO SEE US USE OUR
INFLUENCE TO PREVENT AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. HE MAY CALCULATE
THAT IF WE AGREE TO PROVIDE AN INTERMEDIARY, HE WILL BE NUDGING
US IN THIS DIRECTION. AT THE SAME TIME. LEWEN AND I DO NOT
SHARE WASHINGTON'S JUDGEMENT THAT IT IS EASY FOR MACHEL TO ESTABLISH
CONTACT WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE. HE PROFESSES NOT TO BE
IN TOUCH WITH THEM. WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT THIS. IT WOULD
BE DIFFICULT IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANY MOZAMBICAN
IN WHOM MACHEL HAS CONFIDENCE TO EGT INTO RHODESIA TO SEE EITHER
MUZOREWA OR SITHOLE. MACHEL PROBABLY ALSO HAS STRONG REASONS WHY
HE DOES NOT WISH TO USE A ZIMBABWEAN
AT THIS STAGE, HE MAY NOT WANT ZANU OR ZAPU TO KNOW THAT HE IS
IN TOUCH WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE. HE MAY WELL CONCLUDE THAT
THE USE OF A WESTERN INTERMEDIARY WOULD BE THE SECUREST AND QUICKEST
WAY TO ESTABLISH CONTACT.

7. ALTHOUGH THERE ADMITTLEDLY ARE RISKS INVOLVED, I BELIEVE ON
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BALANCE THAT IT IS IN US INTEREST TO ACCEDE TO MACHEL'S
REQUEST. MACHEL'S APPROACH TO US IS EVIDENCE
THAT HE SEES HIMSELF AS COOPERATING WITH US TO REACH A SETTLEMENT
IN RHODESIA. WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE HIM IN THIS VIEW. MOREOVER
OF THE FRONT PRESIDENTS, MACHEL IS PROBABLY
IN THE BEST POSITION TO BE HELPFUL TO US WITH THE PATRIOTIC
FRONT, SHOULD HE WANT TO DO SO. HE MAY WELL BE THE KEY IF WE ARE
TO STAND ANY CHANCE OF BREAKING DOWN PF INTRANSIGENCE. IT IS ALSO
LIKELY TO BE MACHEL RATHER THAN HIS FRONT LINE COLLEAGUES.
WHO WOULD TURN TO THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS FOR MILITARY HELP IF HE IS
UNHAPPY WITH DEVELOPMENTS OF UK/US RESPONSE THERETO. FINALLY AS WE
LOOK DOWN THE ROAD THE PROSPECTS FOR A SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA
AND AN END TO THE FIGHTING ARE BLEAK
IF THE NATIONALIST LEADERS VIEW EACH OTHER AS IRRECONCILABLE
RIVALS. FORTUNATELY MACHEL IS NOT READY TO ADMIT THAT WE HAVE
ALREADY REACHED THIS POINT. I BELIEVE WE SHOULD EMCOURAGE MACHEL
IN HIS EFFORTS TO
BRING ABOUT A REAPPROACHMENT. FOT THE ABOVE REASONS I RECOMMEND THAT
WE RESPOND POSITIVELY AND QUICKLY TO MACHEL'S REQUEST
FOR HELP IN FINDING AN INTERMEDIARY TO DELIVER HIS MESSAGE
TO MUZOREWS AND SITHOLE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PLANNING MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MAPUTO00198
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780074-0139
Format: TEL
From: MAPUTO
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780242/aaaabjdo.tel
Line Count: 199
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: cdf4a2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 STATE 39527, 78 MAPUTO 192, 78 MAPUTO 171
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3562854
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RHODESIA: MACHEL'S DESIRE FOR CONTACT WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE
TAGS: PDEV, RH, US, MZ, (MACHEL, SAMORA), (MUZOREWA, ABEL), (SITHOLE, NDABANINGI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/cdf4a2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014